



Buzzwords ...

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..... the newsletter for National Beekeepers' Association members

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- * Sugar prices rise
- * Export news
- * Changes in pollination
- * Improving queen quality



Glasses? At my age? ... I wouldn't think so Dear ... Why do you ask?

NBA DIARY

Applications to the **beekeeping industry trust fund** should be made by 31 August. They should go to the NBA secretary, along with full details of the proposed project. (The standard application form which the fund trustees and the NBA executive are working on will be ready for the next round of applications, not this one).

Marlborough branch have mapped out an interesting programme for spring. Their president, Rod McKenzie, says that they welcome visitors to all their activities.

26 August - St Bartholomew's night social at Reg Clarke's honey house, David Street in Blenheim. BYO.

2/3 September - Beginners' beekeeping course.

16 September - Annual disease inspection day, in conjunction with MAF

15 October - Spring field day - venue to be advised

Auckland branch's conference report and next general meeting is on 24 August at 7.30 pm, in St Hilda's Hall, Young Road, Ellerslie.

Waikato branch meetings are in the Green Room at the Homestead, MAF Ruakura, starting at 10 am. The next one is on 18 August, for reporting back by conference delegates.

Bay of Plenty branch are scheduling their winter meetings, wherever possible, for the first Thursday of the month. The starting time will be 6.30 pm, at the Polytechnic apiary building

in Tauranga. The next meeting is on 3 August. Mark Goodwin, MAF apicultural scientist at Ruakura, will be talking on his current projects. Take this opportunity to catch up with the latest beekeeping research.

Hobbyist club news this time, from the **North Canterbury** group. They meet monthly in the evenings during the cooler (non-beekeeping) months and also produce a newsletter. Contact B G Walsh, Walkers Road, RD2, Rangiora.

ELECTION RESULTS

Congratulations to the three successful candidates for the recent executive elections: Nick Wallingford and Dudley Ward in the North Island and Allen McCaw in the South Island. Our thanks to Stan Young who retires after two years' service on executive.

SUGAR PRICES RISE

Sugar prices seem set to rise, as consumption continues to increase and stocks remain at low levels. Some predictions for the world sugar situation in 1989/90.

- * Production will be up by just over 1% from the previous year, to 107.3 million tonnes.
- * Consumption is forecast at 107.5 million tonnes, up just under 1%. Consumption is predicted to continue rising, as world population and income levels grow.
- * Stock levels are low - at 20.5 million tonnes they're 12% below those of two years ago. Stocks represent only 19% of consumption, one of the lowest percentages in the last decade.
- * Prices have risen. In NZ cents per kilogram (converted at 0.58) the world spot price for raw sugar was 46c/kg in April, up from 37c in January.

EXPORT NEWS

News of export markets continues to suggest that honey prices are firming. Some snippets of information:

Argentina's economy is in a parlous state, with inflation at over 100% and interest rates at 155% (that's per month, not per year). Though the austral has just been devalued by 50% as part of the new president's economic reforms, devaluation is low compared with inflation. One commentator says that the economy is "dollarized" and the population "inflation-wise".

The effect of all this is that 6000-8000 tonnes of last year's crop remains unsold. Beekeepers and dealers are content to sit on this until the real price increases. A forecast increase in export tax from 30% to 40 or 50% will encourage this trend. (Some stocks are available at \$US825 per tonne c & f Europe)

Importers and packers in **Germany** predict increased prices in autumn (northern) to around \$US850 per tonne or more, for two reasons. Government stocks in the USA have been

almost depleted, especially for very light honey, and US buyers are active in Canada and Argentina. US imports from China may be interrupted, and to fill the gap honey expected to be sold in Europe may end up in the USA.

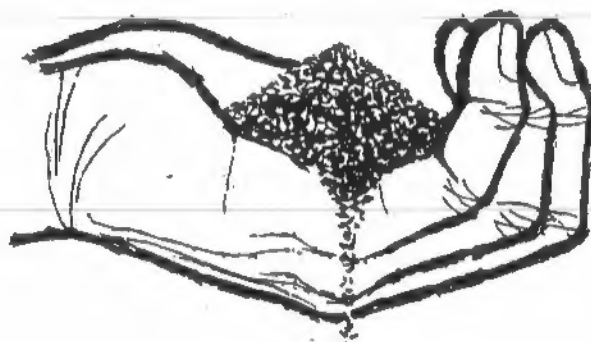
Shipments of **Russian** honey to Europe have stopped. Stocks from eastern bloc countries have been delayed, but are on offer from DM1500-1700 per tonne for multifloral sources.

Good **Mexican** honey has come to an end and only honey with high HMF content is on offer. Last sales were at \$US750 per tonne c & f Europe, with no HMF guarantee.

Cuban honey is selling at from \$US850 per tonne for amber to \$US910 for white, c & f Europe.

Australian prices are similar, with dark amber at \$US840 and white at \$US920, c & f Europe.

Extracted from IHEO data



SUGAR COSTS

Saving costs must be high on everyone's agenda, and beekeepers can do a lot through bulk buying and cooperative ventures. Here's news of one - can we hear of any others?

Bulk, "soft" sugar from PNG is available in Hamilton for \$750/tonne in 50 kg bags. Andrew Cory stocks this on behalf of the importers, and will also mix up syrup to any concentration (refractometer tested). Contact Andrew Cory on (071) 68 318 or Brian Cory on (071) 63 634.

ANNIVERSARY BUMBLER?

Where were you on Monday 13 March? Sounds like a question from the boys in blue, doesn't it.

That day was an auspicious one for New Zealand beekeeping, but it seems to have gone almost unnoticed. It was the 150th anniversary of Mary Bumby arriving in the Hokianga with her bees - the earliest record we have of honey bees being introduced to New Zealand.

MAF staff at Ruakura enjoyed a honey tasting session courtesy of Murray Reid, a worker in period costume featuring as a Miss Bumby lookalike and some local press coverage. Otherwise it seems that the sesquicentennial of New Zealand beekeeping (to use a word we're going to hear a lot next year) went by without acclaim.

DID YOU KNOW?

Some key facts about the US beekeeping industry:

- * Total honey production for 1988 was 96,136 tonnes, down 7% on 1987.
- * Colony numbers are 3.186 million, though colonies which produce honey in more than one state are counted more than once.
- * The overall average honey price received by surveyed producers was \$US 0.501/lb : at an exchange rate of 0.58 that's \$NZ1.67/kg.

And did you know that each year over two million colonies are rented out for pollination in the US, including 15,000 for kiwifruit.

- * Pollination fees are estimated at \$US60.9 million per year (average \$US30 per service).
- * The increase in crop yields attributable to honey bee pollination is estimated at \$US9,700 million in 1985, according to a recent survey.

SOUTH AFRICA CONFERENCE

An international symposium on beekeeping is being hosted next January by the South African federation of beekeepers' associations. The symposium will be at Stellenbosch on 24-26 January 1990, and subjects include pollination, bee products, bee genetics and South African beekeeping.

Further details from PO Box 3306, Cape Town 8000, South Africa.

OVERSEAS BUYER

A part-time beekeeper from Canada is looking at evaluating a full-time operation in New Zealand. He'll be in this country in August - anyone interested should contact Ted Overton, 50 Glen Elm Avenue, Toronto, Canada M4T 1T7.

POLLINATION BEEKEEPERS LOOK OUT!

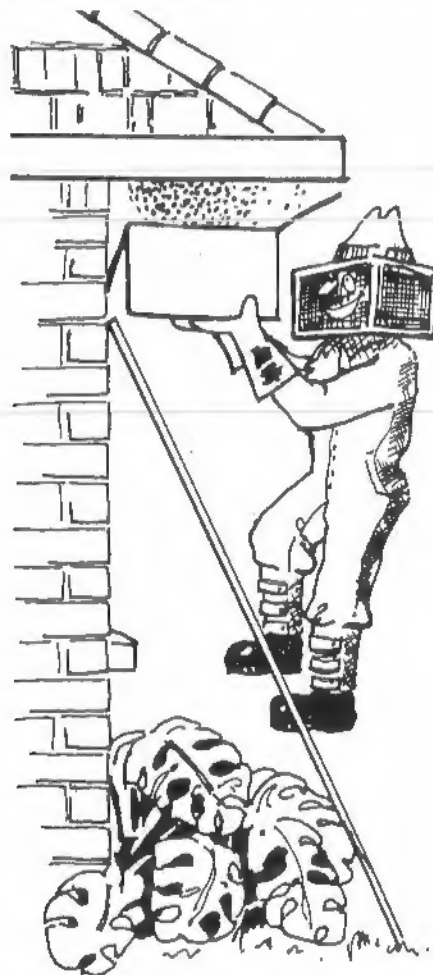
The pundits are probably right - cyanamide will change the face of kiwifruit pollination for good.

Use of this chemical will be well up this year. While some growers might be hanging on to see what the winter chilling will be like, many others have taken the plunge and have decided to spray a lot more of their properties this year.

One source says that 45 tonnes of cyanamide has been imported for next season by private growers alone, let alone what traders are bringing in. Not a lot of spray pollination is likely, because of the cost and because there are limited supplies of pollen available.

What does this mean for you? Hives will be needed earlier, sure, but also hive quality will be more important than ever. Are your hives low in autumn stores? Are we going to have another mild winter? And how about yet another tough spring? What are pollen supplies like in your area?

You have to think now of what you're going to do in order to get more consistent hives earlier. You have to think now about supplementary feeding and budget now for sugar and pollen substitutes such as lactalbumin and yeast. Nosema control could also be important.



PLACES AVAILABLE AT TELFORD

A sound, practically-based beekeeper training course? That's available to you right here in New Zealand at Telford Farm Training Institute.

The course runs for one year (40 weeks) and includes field work and self-paced study. Many students from previous courses are involved in the industry and taking major roles in it.

Telford is near Balclutha, and full residential facilities are provided. Bursaries are also available to help with the cost of the course. If this interests you or someone you know, contact Mr Altoft, the farm supervisor, at (0299) 81 550, or write to Telford, Private Bag, Balclutha.

NEW TIMBER CODES

The old C series of codes for timber treatment has been replaced by a new set of "hazard class descriptions".

Under the new Woodmark system, treated timber is coded from H1 to H6. In brief, the codes are:

- H1 Insecticide treated, for internal framing
- H2 Termite resistant, used for exports to Australia
- H3 For timber exposed to weather but not ground contact
- H4 Ground contact such as posts, crib walling and barn poles
- H5 Ground contact in critical uses such as pole houses and horticultural structures
- H6 Marine use such as jetty piles.

A couple of points to note about the new system. All hazard class timber is insecticide treated. Timber treated to a particular class may have different chemicals used on it, though it should all perform to the same standard.

Information from NZTPC

ATTENTION

END OF HONEY POT RANGE

Honey containers are no longer being made by Auckland Tool & Gauge. The firm has changed its name and is concentrating on other products. Existing stocks are currently being cleared - if interested contact Grahame Irvine at Ronstan International, PO Box 85 091, Auckland 10 or fax (09) 478 7087.

THOSE INITIALS

You've heard of Yuppies (Young, upwardly-mobile, professional people) and of course you know of Dinkies: Double income, no kids. Well, the latest in the series are Sitcoms: Single income, two children, one mortgage; and Diamonds: Double income, awesome mortgage, offspring, no dough.

KIWIFRUIT - SIZE IS IMPORTANT

Kiwifruit growers will be even more aware of the importance of fruit size this year, with the new differential payment system. The KMB is seeking an average fruit size in the 33-36 count range. Premiums will apply to fruit in the 27-30 range, and penalties to 39-46 sizes.

BETTER QUEEN BEES

There are two main ways of getting better queen bees. One method is receiving quite a bit of discussion at the moment, while the other is mentioned very little. A new publication aims to address that issue.

Importing superior genetic material is one way of improving the quality of queen bees in this country, and there are currently a number of proposals for doing this.

Genetics constitutes one limit to queen quality, and the other is physiological - how well each individual queen is constructed.

Queen physiological quality is a discussion paper intended for queen bee producers in New Zealand, and is written by Reg Clarke, a beekeeper from Blenheim. It covers the main factors which indicate the physiological quality of queen bees - queen weight, ovariole number, spermatheca size, sperm number and density.

These parameters indicate how well a queen bee has been reared, and the paper suggests minimum standards which should be aimed for by commercial producers. How to achieve these standards is discussed only briefly - this document suggests that it's up to each producer to experiment with methods and use queen quality testing of samples to determine which is most successful.

This paper is a comprehensive review of factors influencing the quality of queen bees, drawing on a wide selection of references. It should be read by all queen bee producers who claim to be committed to quality.

It should also be read by their customers, as queen producers will only produce the quality that is demanded by the end user. Queen quality will improve only when users are convinced of the need to pay more for bees of guaranteed quality, and producers are thus prepared to implement better rearing and quality checking methods.

Queen physiological quality is available for \$3 (post paid) from R J Clarke, 81 Lakings Road, Blenheim.

BUZZWORDS IS ...

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